

T-280

Dodson-Keithley House  
St. Michaels  
private

c. 1881

The Dodson-Keithley house stands in a line of mid to late nineteenth-century dwellings on the north side of Cherry Street. It is highly likely that this prominent lot at the head of Locust Street has been improved by various buildings since the early years of St. Michaels development. However, the current Victorian dwelling was evidently erected during the 1880s when the property escalated in value from \$400 in 1881 to \$1350 in 1898. Mere inflation would not account for such an increase in value. The 1877 St. Michaels town map does locate a structure on this site, but the mapped building does not repeat the ell-shape of the extant house. Evidently, whatever stood on the lot during the 1870s and before was replaced by this house shortly after 1881 when Gustavus K. Benson purchased the corner property for \$400. Seventeen years later the house was transferred to Richard S. Dodson in whose family the property has remained to the present day.

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. T-280  
Magi No. 2102802604  
DOE   yes   no

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic DODSON-KEITHLEY HOUSE

and/or common 201 Cherry Street

## 2. Location

street & number 201 Cherry Street    not for publication

city, town St. Michaels    vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Talbot

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>  </u> district	<u>  </u> public	<u>  </u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture <u>  </u> museum
<u>  </u> building(s)	<u>  </u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial <u>  </u> park
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>  </u> educational <u>  </u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<u>  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>  </u> entertainment <u>  </u> religious
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>  </u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<u>  </u> government <u>  </u> scientific
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>  </u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial <u>  </u> transportation
	<u>  </u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<u>  </u> no	<u>  </u> military <u>  </u> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name W. Preston Keithley

street & number 201 Cherry Street telephone no.:

city, town St. Michaels state and zip code Maryland 21663

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of Talbot County Court liber 433

street & number Talbot County Courthouse folio 252

city, town Easton state MD 21601

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historic Sites Inventory

date 1976    federal    ☒ state    county    local

pository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

## 7. Description

Survey No. T-280

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Dodson-Keithley house stands at 201 Cherry Street in the northern residential district of St. Michaels, Talbot County, Maryland. The two-story frame house faces south with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis.

Probably built during the early 1880s, this two-story ell-shaped frame house is supported by a new, continuous brick foundation and sheathed with a uniform layer of German siding. The medium pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the back of the house is a modern two-story service wing.

The south facade is an asymmetrical three-bay elevation with a recessed entrance wall and a projecting gabled bay. The front door, marked by four heavily molded panels, is topped by a two-light transom, and the adjacent single-pane sash window is flanked by louvered shutters. Covering this recessed two-bay elevation is a two-story shed roofed porch supported by chamfered posts. Sawn baluster railings stretch between the posts, and the corners are trimmed with simple brackets. The second floor is detailed in a similar manner with a four-panel door, a two-light transom, and a single-pane sash window. The gabled bay is dominated by a two-story, three-sided bay window. According to the owner the bay was originally only one story high and within the past twenty years raised to its current level. Narrow single-pane sash windows light each side; raised panels mark the aprons beneath the windows. The cornice is trimmed with brackets and large dentils.

The west gable end is marked by pairs of single-pane sash windows that light the first and second floors. The gable end eaves are slightly extended. The east side is pierced by single-pane sash windows as well as a single-story bay window that lights the dining room. A modern brick chimney protrudes through the eastern section of the house. The north side of the Victorian dwelling is fully covered by the two-story service wing that has been added within the last few years.

The interiors were extensively reworked during the past few years as well, but original features were maintained. The center stair is distinguished by a heavily turned newel post, turned balusters, and a oval profile handrail which continues to the second floor uninterrupted. The stringer is trimmed with a scroll decoration. A large arched doorway that opened into the west room was reduced to a to a standard sized door. The mantel in the west room has been removed and bookcases have been installed. The east room or parlor retains a Victorian mantel in addition to grained interior window shutters. The dining room behind the parlor has been generally refitted with new finishes including chair rail and new six-panel doors.

The second floor was unseen.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. T-280

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
— prehistoric	— archeology-prehistoric	— community planning	— landscape architecture	— religion
— 1400-1499	— archeology-historic	— conservation	— law	— science
— 1500-1599	— agriculture	— economics	— literature	— sculpture
— 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	— education	— military	— social/
— 1700-1799	— art	— engineering	— music	humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	— commerce	— exploration/settlement	— philosophy	— theater
— 1900-	— communications	— industry	— politics/government	— transportation
		— invention		— other (specify)

### Specific dates

### Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Dodson-Keithley house is a distinctive ell-shaped frame house that stands on the north side of Cherry Street at the intersection of Locust Street. Modifications to this 1880s frame house have been made inside as well as out, but the integrity of the Victorian design with characteristic St. Michaels details remains undisturbed. The two-story porch with sawn balusters and c-shaped brackets contrasts with the two-story bay window. The house stands in line with an uninterrupted string of period dwellings on Cherry Street.

### HISTORY AND SUPPORT

It is highly likely that this prominent Cherry Street lot at the head of Locust Street has been improved by various buildings since the turn of the nineteenth century. However, the current Victorian dwelling was evidently erected during the 1880s when the property escalated in value from \$400 in 1881 to \$1350 in 1898. Mere inflation would not account for such an increase in value. The 1877 St. Michaels town map does locate a structure on this site, but the mapped building does not repeat the ell-shape of the extant house. Evidently whatever stood on the lot during the 1870s was replaced by this house shortly after. Ownership of the lot during the estimated period of rebuilding was held by Gustavus K. Benson, who purchased the corner property in 1881 for \$400.(91/384) Seventeen years later, the house was transferred to Richard S. Dodson in whose family the property has remained to the present day.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. T-280

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart Private Consultant

organization

date 1/14/88

street &amp; number P. O. Box 5

telephone (301) 651-1094

city or town Westover

state MD 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

YEAR: 1968 VOL: 433 PAGE: 252

FROM: William Reddie & Jane S. PRICE:

TO: W. Preston Keithley

NOTES Two contiguous lots. Begins at stone 14 at NE corner of Cherry and Cedar streets; run with Cherry N 77 30"E 60 feet; then N 12 30"W 128 feet to lot number 8; with #8 S 77 30"W 60 feet to Cedar; with Cedar to the beginning. This lot contains the house. The second lot fronts on Willow Street and Cedar Alley (Street) and is 57' on Willow by 61 feet on Cedar.

YEAR: 1968 VOL: 433 PAGE: 248

FROM: Dodson Heirs PRICE:

TO: William Reddie

NOTES Part of title clearance in favor of Wm. Preston Keithley as above. The heirs were Dorothy D. Keithley, W. Preston Keithley, Edith D. Lee, George S. Lee, Warthman H. Dodson, Margaret Dodson, Wm. Lyell Dodson, and Dorothy DeHart Dodson.

Part of the property devised by Ethel W. Dodson by will 1956, 33/83 probated 1964.

YEAR: 1898 VOL: 129 PAGE: 233

FROM: Mariana Benson, trustee PRICE: \$1350

TO: Richard S. Dodson

NOTES In 1881, Gustavus K. Benson gave a mortgage to James Benson, later assigned to Mariana in 1898. Default has occurred and Mariana sells to Dodson for \$1350. At NE corner of Cherry Street and Cedar Alley. Begins at stone #14 and follows first description.

Conveyed to Gustavus K. Benson by Alexis A. Pascault 1881, 91/384.

YEAR: 1881 VOL: 91 PAGE: 384

FROM: Alexis A. Pascault and Marie E. PRICE: \$400

TO: Gustavus K. Benson

NOTES Same description.

Conveyed to Alexis Pascault by William Collins, trustee 1878, 85/372 also a deed from Susan Thompson of Dorchester County 1878, 86/294

YEAR: 1878 VOL: 86 PAGE: 294

FROM: Susan Thompson (of Dorchester County) PRICE: \$75

TO: Alexis Pascault

NOTES Lot number 14. Same as previous descriptions. Leased by Anthonu C. Thompson and Susan to Gustavus Jefferson for 99 years 1841/55/458.

YEAR: 1878. VOL: 85 PAGE: 372

FROM: William Collins, trustee PRICE:

TO: Alexis Pascault

NOTES Per decree of the Circuit Court, January 1877. Property is sold for taxes for 1874 and 1875. \$22.96 plus \$19.34. A house and lot as described in notes and deeds from Margaret Blades and Margaret A. Harrison 1873, 79/60.

YEAR: 1873 VOL: 79 PAGE: 60

FROM: Margaret Blades and Margaret A. Harrison PRICE:

TO: Charles E. Jefferson

NOTES Per design and intention of Gustavus Jefferson, dcd. to Charles E. Jefferson, surviving child of Gustavus. Described as "on Cherry Street adjoining the property of Robert Dodson.

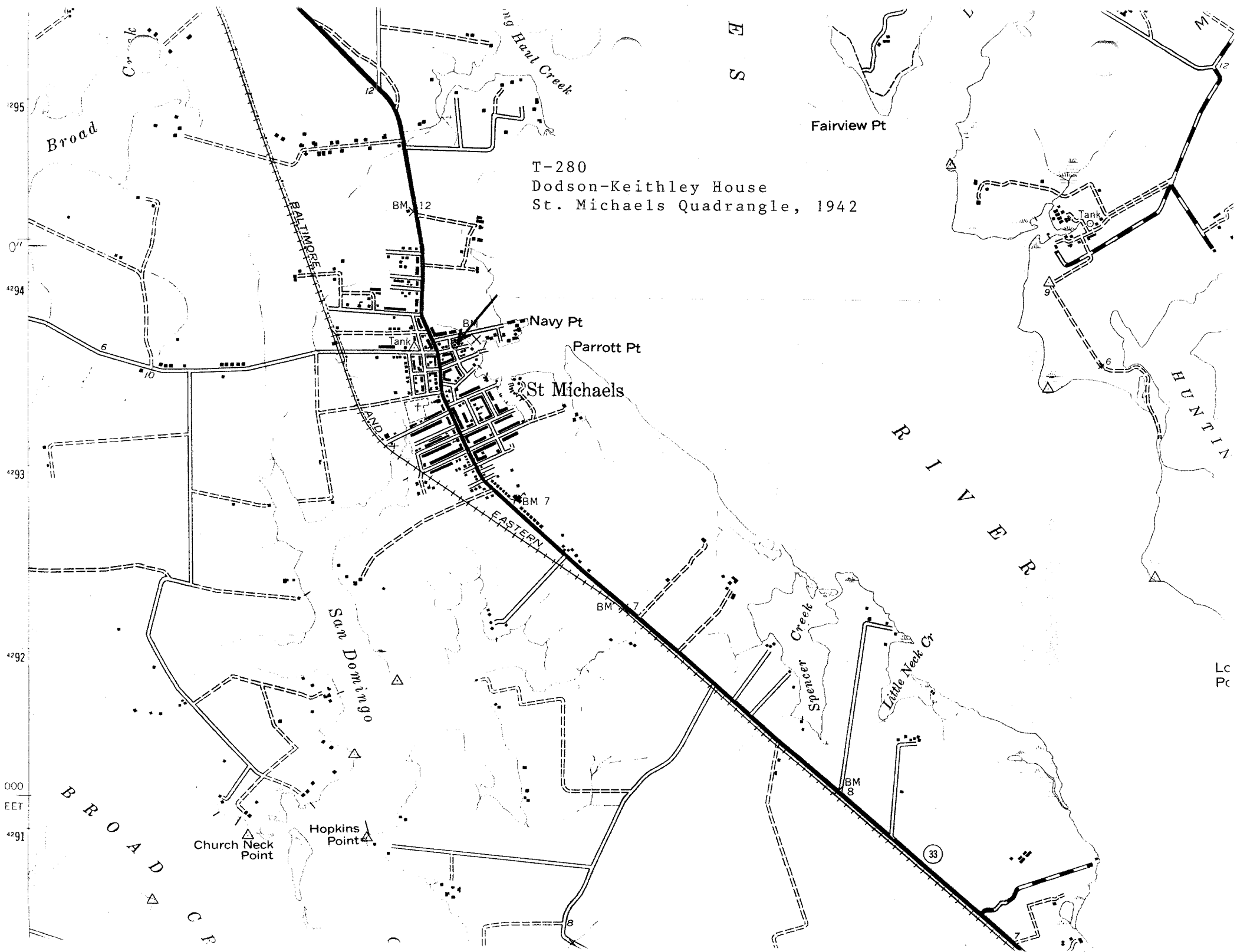
YEAR: 1841 VOL: 55 PAGE: 459

FROM: Anthony C. Thompson and Susan PRICE: lease

TO: Gustavus Jefferson

NOTES A lease on lot number 14, 60'x120', adjacent to lot number 8. for 99 years.

No previous transfers of this property were found in the land records. The land was part of "Joseph's Lot" ("Stopper") , resurveyed for Joseph Harrison in 1744. It would have descended by inheritance to Mary Harrison and to Jeremiah Harrison who could have given the lease to Dr. Thompson. The lot is centrally located with respect to the developing town and it would not be surprising if the lot had been occupied from 1800 on.



T-280  
Dodson-Keithley House  
St. Michaels Quadrangle, 1942

BM 12

Navy Pt

Parrott Pt

St Michaels

BM 7

BM 7

BM 8

33

Lc  
Pt





T-280

201 Cherry Street

St. Michaels, Talot Co., MD

South elevation

12/87 Paul Touart photographer

Negative/MD Historical Trust



T-280

201 Cherry Street

St. Michaels, Talbot Co., MD

Southwest elevation

12/87 Paul Touart photographer

Negative/MD Historical Trust



16 X 1.80

50%

280

T-280